

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PHNOM 06025 061050Z

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 189

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PHNOM PENH 6025

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OREP, CB, US

SUBJECT: REPORT FROM STAFFDEL MOOSE-MEISSNER FOR SENATE FOREIGN
RELATIONS COMMITTEE

DEPARTMENT PASS PAT HOLT, CHIEF OF STAFF, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN
RELATIONS, FROM MOOSE AND MEISSNER

1. IT PROVED POSSIBLE AFTER ALL FOR US TO VISIT PHNOM PENH.
WE ARRIVED AT 8:30 A.M. AND WILL LEAVE AT 3:30 THIS AFTERNOON.
AT NOON TODAY WE CALLED ON INTERIM PRESIDENT SAUKHAM KHOY.
HE PRESENTED HIS CASE FOR SUPPLEMENTAL ASSISTANCE AND REVIEWED
STEPS WHICH HE SAID HE WAS TAKING TO LIFT MORALE OF ARMED FORCES
AND TO COMBAT CORRUPTION WHICH HE SAID HAD SERIOUSLY IMPAIRED
PAST GOVERNMENTS AND RESULTED IN WASTE OF AID.

2. DISCUSSION THEN TURNED TO PROSPECTS FOR A NEGOTIATED END
TO CONFLICT. WE REFERRED TO VIEW EXPRESSED BY SOME MEMBERS OF
CONGRESS THAT ADDITIONAL AID WOULD PROLONG WAR WITH NO END IN
SIGHT AND ASKED WHETHER HE SAW ANY REALISTIC BASIS ON WHICH A
NEGOTIATED SOLUTION COULD BE FOUND. SAUKHAM KHOY SAID THAT BEST
SOLUTION UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD BE FOR KHMER PEOPLE TO "INVITE"
PRINCE SIHANOUK TO RETURN. IF THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE DECIDED TO
INVITE SIHANOUK HE WOULD BE WILLING TO STEP ASIDE IF NECESSARY AND
TO SEE THAT OTHER PERSONALITIES UNACCEPTABLE TO SIHANOUK DID SO AS
WELL.

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PAGE 02 PHNOM 06025 061050Z

3. WE ASKED WHETHER THE CAMBODIAN ARMED FORCES WOULD AGREE TO

SIHANOUK'S RETURN. SAUKHAM KHOY SAID HE COULD CONVINCE MOST COMMANDERS AND THAT THOSE WHO REMAINED OPPOSED WOULD BE NEUTRALIZED. SAUKHAM KHOY SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE REACTION OF THE KHMER INSURGENT LEADERS IN CAMBODIA MIGHT BE TO THIS IDEA BUT HE NOTED THAT IF AN INVITATION WERE EXTENDED PUBLICLY, THE INSURGENT LEADERSHIP MIGHT FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BLOCK.

4. SAUKHAM KHOY SAID THAT TIME WOULD BE REQUIRED TO WORK OUT A SOLUTION ALONG THE LINES HE HAD SUGGESTED AND THAT SOME SUPPLEMENTAL AID WAS A NECESSITY. HE REQUESTED THAT WE PASS HIS VIEWS TO THE COMMITTEE, MENTIONING SPECIFICALLY SENATOR MANSFIELD. HE ADDED THAT THE GOOD OFFICES OF THE "GREAT POWERS", PARTICULARLY THE UNITED STATES, WOULD BE NEEDED IN APPROACHING SIHANOUK.

5. AMBASSADOR DEAN TRANSMITTING ACCOUNT OF MEETING AND SAUKHAM KHOY'S PROPOSAL TO DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

6. COMMENT: IT IS VERY LATE IN TERMS OF THE MILITARY SITUATION HERE FOR THE CAMBODIANS TO TRY THIS PROPOSAL. CERTAINLY IT COULD NOT HOPE TO SUCCEED WITHOUT THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE INTERVENTION OF THE UNITED STATES. AT THE MOMENT, ACCORDING TO AMBASSADOR DEAN, THERE ARE NO NEGOTIATING INITIATIVES OF WHICH HE IS AWARE. AS WE REPORTED EARLIER, THE CAMBODIAN ARMED FORCES ARE NEARING THE END OF THE LINE. IF THE INSURGENTS WERE TO EXPLOIT EXISTING GAPS IN PHNOM PENH DEFENSES IT COULD ALL BE OVER IN A HURRY. AT THE MOMENT THEY MAY NOT BE STRONG ENOUGH TO DO SO. MEANWHILE THE PEOPLE ARE SUFFERING TREMENDOUSLY.

7. NO MATTER HOW THE CONFLICT ENDS, THE NUTRITIONAL NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE WILL CONTINUE. ACCORDING TO EMBASSY, SEVENTY PER CENT OF THE POPULATION OF PHNOM PENH ARE SUFFERING FROM SEVERE MALNUTRITION. ACTUAL DEATHS BY STARVATION ARE NOT COMMON BUT THE YOUNG AND OLD ARE BEGINNING TO DIE IN GROWING NUMBERS FROM PNEUMONIA, INFLUENZA, DYSENTERY, DEHYDRATION AND OTHER ILLNESSES. THERE ARE ROUGHLY TWO MILLION IN PHNOM PENH AND THE MARITIME PROVINCES AND TWO MILLION IN OTHER ENCLAVES DEPENDENT ON FOOD AID--OVER EIGHTY PER CENT OF THE POPULATION. NO LARGE VOLUME OF DOMESTICALLY PRODUCED FOOD WILL BE AVAILABLE UNTIL THE NOVEMBER-DECEMBER RICE HARVEST, PROVIDED PLANTING POSSIBLE IN MAY.

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PAGE 03 PHNOM 06025 061050Z

8. THE EMBASSY ESTIMATES VERY ROUGHLY THAT THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE FOR A MAJORITY OF THE KHMER PEOPLE WHETHER FROM THE U.S. OR INTERNATIONAL SOURCES:

(A) 400,000 METRIC TONS OF RICE AT \$200,000,000 INCLUDING FREIGHT.

(B) 80,000 METRIC TONS OF HIGH PROTEIN FOOD SUPPLEMENTS TO INCLUDE K-MIX AND DRY MILK FOR CHILDREN. COST UNKNOWN.

(C) SUFFICIENT RICE SEED TO PLANT 2,000,000 HECTARES.

COST UNKNOWN.

(D) MEDICAL SUPPLIES, SURGICAL TEAMS, AND PROSTHETIC DEVICES
POSSIBLY COSTING \$8,000,000.

(E) 100,000 TEMPORARY LIVING UNITS PRIOR TO THE RAINY
SEASON WHICH STARTS IN A FEW WEEKS, \$20,000,000 AT \$200 PER UNIT.

(F) EQUIPMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION AND WATER, \$10,000,000.
DEAN

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDEE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, ITINERARY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PHNOM06025
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750119-0399
From: PHNOM PENH
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750477/aaaacsqo.tel
Line Count: 123
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION H
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <09 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REPORT FROM STAFFDEL MOOSE-MEISSNER FOR SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE
TAGS: OREP, PFOR, EAID, CB, US, SFRC, (MOOSE, RICHARD), (MEISSNER, CHARLES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006